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*SECRET Central***THE VOLGA-DON CANAL**

Preliminary work is under way for digging a canal which will connect the Volga and Don rivers.

Location

Tests were made early this year near Saloni. This locality is on the Don river, about 300 km above Rostov, approximately at the same latitude as Stalingrad, and 40 km above Romanesti [*Romanovka*] the closest railroad station.

Work performed

Borings 3¹/₂ m deep are drilled in the sector the canal should cross. Samples of earth are collected from the boring machine for every meter of depth and sent to Moscow.

Manpower

At the end of 1948, about 3,000 civilian prisoners and 200 POW were building an ~~enormous~~ enormous camp of barracks designed for 30,000 Russians which are provided as manpower for the construction of the canal. These latter will be supplied from Russian civilian prisoners.

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II RAILROADS IN SIBERIA

The construction of the South Siberian Railroad System provided for in the postwar Five-Year Plan, will connect Akmolinsk, Pavlodar, Barnaul and Stalinsk to railroads of Eastern Siberia.

The two principal sections of this line are Akmolinsk-Pavlodar and Barnaul-Stalinsk.

1. Akmolinsk-Pavlodar section

The director of works on this line is Beresnev; his assistant is Gruzdev; the chief engineer is Gulakov. Work started simultaneously from both ends of the line.

In November 1948 laying of track between Akmolinsk and the Sentas River was completed. Work could not be carried further, since 2nd cubic meters of material accumulated for the construction of a bridge had not been put under shelter, and could not be used after snow had fallen. Operations to clear the material had to be interrupted in December because of new snowfalls. This bridge could not be built before the onset of winter, because tracklaying operations progressed more slowly than expected. The organization of an advance locomotive depot has been neglected, and locomotives had to be taken to Akmolinsk for the slightest repair, which resulted in a considerable waste of time.

On the Pavlodar end, work also had to be interrupted at the beginning of winter, because the 40,000 cross-ties, already shipped in summer had not been impregnated, and in November were already buried under the snow. The track has been laid only up to Ekibastuz. It is also feared that the dam on the Irtysh River may break in the spring of 1949, since it was not reinforced as provided for in the plan.

2. Section Barnaul-Stalinsk

On this section, the Altayskaya ^{Artilla} ~~section~~ ^{section} is giving the builders the most trouble. Although ^{it} ~~their~~ portion is only 200 kilometers long, 13,000,000 cu m of earth are to be excavated, which ^{equals} ~~represents~~ one half of the work done for the entire construction of the Turkestan. Because of these impediments the sector has been especially well

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equipped with excavators, cranes etc; however the gasoline supply has been poorly organized, and therefore machinery is often idle. Out of the 200 kilometers planned, only 148 were completed at the beginning of 1948-1949, while according to the plan the work on this sector was to be completely finished.

III THE SALLA RAILROAD

Attached is a photostatic copy of a document providing information on the Salla railroad, between Kemijarvi (Finland) and Karna (U.S.S.R.)

This sector is the one which was in the possession of the German and Finnish armed forces in the autumn of 1944.

The part of this sector located in Finland has not been changed since the war. From information gathered on the part located in the USSR ~~until today~~ it can be stated that the lay-out indicated on the map attached herewith is still valid.

From the viewpoint of the vulnerability of this line, it should be mentioned that the destruction of the Kairala bridge, in the Soviet territory, would automatically result in an interruption of all the West-East highway and railroad traffic. According to specialists this bridge would be the most difficult to rebuild.

Figures on maps, near the locations of bridges indicate their span or the span of arches when there are several.

Enlargement of the Salla station must be completed by the end of July.

This station previously had 9 tracks including the main track.

The new station will be about 1,500 m long. It will have:

- 6 tracks, 750 meters long.
- 5 auxiliary tracks extending far into the woods.
- 1 complementary (?) track, very long.
- 1 watering point

The Kuolajärvi or Kairala station has 3 tracks, about 800 m long.

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The Kutsa or Nurmi station has 3 tracks, from 450 to 500 m long.

This station has a very important watering point.

The Alakurti station has 4 tracks, 900 meters long.

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